



MEETING ROOM POLICY

The Washington County Library makes meeting rooms available for public use in order to advance the public benefit which occurs when information, ideas, culture, and community events are shared. Public rather than private benefit is the primary objective and guides the interpretation and application of the following policies and regulations.

General Policy

- I. The library encourages the use of its meeting rooms for public meetings of an informational, educational, cultural or civic nature. All meetings and programs not related to library business will be open to the public within the provisions established in these policies and regulations.
- II. The granting of permission by the Library for the use of its meeting rooms does not constitute endorsement by the Library of any points of view expressed in any meetings, programs, or promotional literature. No advertisement or announcement claiming or implying endorsement by the library is permitted.
- III. Meeting rooms shall be reserved only by a resident of the Washington County Library's service area, as defined in the residency policy, or by a patron who has purchased a currently valid non-resident library card. This requirement can be waived by the Library Director for public hearings by duly constituted local, state, and federal governmental agencies.
- IV. No admission fees, or fees for participating in any meeting or program in the Library shall be charged. No fees or charges for services or products provided by the meeting's sponsors or any other participants in the meeting shall be charged. No donations shall be solicited or contributions taken on Library premises during, previous to, or after any meeting. No charge shall be levied during, previous to, or after any meeting for materials integral to participation in the meeting. These rules are waived for events sponsored by Washington County Library.
- V. Exceptions may be granted, on a case by case basis, to nationally recognized youth organizations. Such an exception would allow the youth group to regularly meet in meeting rooms even if the organization charges membership fees and conducts fundraising activities. An exception may only be granted if the organization lacks sponsorship that provides an alternative meeting location. If an exception is granted, the organization will be responsible for payment of cleaning deposits.
- VI. Individuals and groups shall not use the meeting rooms of the Library to solicit business directly or indirectly, nor to encourage attendance at future meetings where solicitation would occur; to recruit or train staff members or others for work in or on behalf of a commercial enterprise; to promote their business, services, or products in any way or to advertise their business, services or products in any way except as may occur incidentally, such as identifying the organization for which they work as a means of establishing their credibility to address the topic of the meeting.

- VII. Individuals and groups shall not use the meeting rooms of the Library for social or religious ceremonial functions, for purposes which are illegal, or for purposes which would interfere with the operation of the Library. Social and religious ceremonial functions which are not permitted include but are not limited to: private parties, reunions, services of worship or wedding ceremonies. Other ceremonial functions, such as graduations and installation of organizational officers may be permitted when they are incidental to and a minor portion of a program which otherwise fully complies with the purposes and requirements of this policy.
- VIII. The Library reserves the right to either substitute facilities or cancel permission to use the meeting rooms if the scheduled room is needed for Library purposes.
- IX. An individual or group shall not reserve a specific meeting room more frequently than once per week. When the nature of an event, such as a workshop or conference requires special arrangements, the arrangements may be approved for use of a meeting room up to three consecutive days. Any extension beyond the three-day limitation can be granted only by the Library Director upon submission of a written request.
- X. Meeting rooms may be reserved up to one year in advance of the meeting date.
- XI. Individuals and groups with a need to utilize meeting rooms on a recurring or regular basis will be accommodated with the understanding that no tenure or priority exists in meeting room use beyond these policies and regulations. In establishing these policies and regulations, it is the purpose of the Library to balance the need of individuals and groups to engage in regularly scheduled meetings, but in an effort to allow fair access to others, the Library meeting rooms shall be reserved on the following basis: Individuals and groups needing to schedule a meeting room on a regular basis may do so for up to six consecutive meetings. They can renew their request for an additional six meetings following their fourth meeting, provided that no other meetings have been scheduled that would preclude the renewal. Following the tenth meeting, re-application can be made for the next time period, provided that no other meetings have been scheduled that would preclude the renewal.
- XII. Groups and individuals are expected to utilize meeting rooms as scheduled. If meeting rooms are not going to be used as scheduled, the Library should be notified as early as possible, in order to make the rooms available to others. If twice in a six-month period of time, a group or individual fails to notify the Library at least 24 hours in advance that a room will not be used, that group or individual will lose the privilege to schedule meeting rooms at the Library for a period of six months from the date when the second violation occurs, and will be so notified by letter. This loss of privileges can be waived by the Director of the Library if in his or her judgment sufficient reasons for failure to cancel use of the meeting rooms are presented in writing.
- XIII. Individuals or groups wishing to show copyrighted materials such as videocassettes, DVDs, films or similar materials in the Library's meeting rooms, whether on library-owned or privately-owned equipment, must first secure and present to the Library written permission to do so from the holder of the copyright, or must submit evidence that public-performance rights for the material have otherwise been granted. The Library Director may deny permission to show copyrighted materials in its meeting rooms if he or she is not satisfied that appropriate authorization has been obtained from the holder of the copyright or if ample evidence has not been submitted in a timely manner to verify that public-performance rights have been granted.

- XIV. The Library shall not provide storage, even temporarily, for the property of organizations, groups, or individuals using meeting rooms.
- XV. The Library will not be responsible for any loss or damage to property, including equipment, personal belongings, decorations, or any other items, owned by individuals or groups using meeting rooms.
- XVI. Neither the name nor the address of the Library may be used as the official address, mailing address, or headquarters for any individual or groups using meeting rooms.
- XVII. The individual who applies for the use of the meeting room shall be responsible for discipline and for those in attendance, and reasonable care of the room, library furnishings, and library equipment. The Library will hold the applicant financially responsible for any damage to library property which occurs during the meeting or program. The applicant is responsible to return chairs and tables to an orderly arrangement, picking up and disposing of papers, and clearing away any clutter. Failure to comply may result in denial of future meeting room use for both the applicant and group using the room for a period of a year, and in cases of property damage, may result in legal action. No individual or group will be allowed use of meeting rooms if the individual or group has failed to pay for past damage to the premises, furnishings, or equipment.
- XVIII. This policy applies, but is not limited to, the following areas: The Community Meeting Rooms at the Enterprise, New Harmony, Hurricane, Santa Clara, Washington, and St. George Libraries and the Conference rooms at St. George and Washington when the partition is open.

Piano Use

- XIX. The Washington County Library has pianos available as a convenience for citizens wishing to use them during programs held in the library. However, the Board of Directors does not consider the provisions of a piano to be a bona fide library service. Therefore, a \$5 fee per use will be assessed to contribute to off-setting tuning, long-term costs of significant repairs and potential replacements. The Board of Directors believes that it is appropriate to place a small portion of the long-term burden of costs on each user of this service. Over time, the revenue from the fees collected will compensate for a substantial portion of the costs of any major repairs or replacement, which could otherwise be paid for only by using funds which should be spent on bona fide library services.
- XX. The fee for piano use will be collected for each block of meeting room time signed up for by an individual for up to 3 hours. Time beyond 3 hours will be considered a second “use” and will be subject to an additional fee assessment.
- XXI. Individuals who have signed up for meeting room time and piano use for the purpose of presenting a program may utilize the piano for a ninety-minute practice session without an additional use charge. This practice is considered part of the program for which approval has been granted and is intended to allow participants in the program to become familiar with the piano and the setting. Consequently, no charge can be levied in relationship to practice time granted in accordance with this policy.

XXII. Pianos are provided to support the purpose of the meeting rooms to advance the sharing of information, ideas, culture and community events. Consequently, they are not available for private lessons or private practice except as related to an approved meeting room application in accordance with this policy.

XXIII. This policy applies to locations with pianos.

Meeting Room Regulations

XXIV. Applications from groups and organizations wishing to use the meeting rooms are to be made on forms furnished by the Library. The form is to be signed by a representative of the group or organization who is an adult and a resident as defined by Library policy and who is willing to be responsible for using the meeting rooms in a safe and appropriate manner, and in conformity with Library policies. The responsible individual will be given the option on the application form, to permit or to not permit his or her name to be released upon request to the public as a contact person for the group or organization reserving the room. Meeting rooms will be reserved only upon receipt of a completed application form in the branch library where the meeting will occur, and the reservation will be made final only upon approval of the application. Meeting rooms will not be reserved by telephone. Applications may be mailed or electronically conveyed to the applicant upon the applicant's request.

XXV. Meeting room reservations will be made in order in which written applications are received.

XXVI. Individuals or groups may not enter the library before opening hours to begin setting up for meetings or events.

XXVII. Closing time for evening meetings is fifteen minutes before the scheduled library closing hour. Groups are expected to vacate the meeting rooms promptly in order to allow the next group to enter the rooms, or to allow the Library staff to complete its closing procedures. Groups that fail to vacate the meeting rooms promptly at the designated meeting closing time may, upon the second violation, be denied meeting room privileges for six months. Exceptions to this would be the following libraries with meeting rooms available after hours: Washington, Enterprise, Hurricane, and New Harmony.

XXVIII. A specified non-refundable fee will be charged when using the Library's equipment specified on the meeting room application. Groups requesting to use the Library's audio-visual equipment during a meeting must make arrangements to have an adult member of the group instructed in equipment use by a staff member. Groups needing such instruction for equipment use must notify the Library 48 hours before the meeting in order to allow ample time to make arrangements.

XXIX. Groups may provide their own audio-visual equipment to use during meetings if arrangements are made in advance to insure compatibility with the Library's equipment, floor space, and utilities. A qualified operator of said audio-visual equipment must be provided by the group. Audio-visual equipment and other property owned by the group may not be brought to the library earlier than the scheduled time and must be removed immediately after the meeting ends. The Library is not responsible for the care or security of any equipment provided by the user of the meeting room.

- XXX. Decorations in the meeting room must be approved in advance by the branch manager. Nothing may be fastened or affixed to the walls, ceilings, or floors, in any manner.
- XXXI. Only library employees may authorize the movement of tables, chairs, and other library furniture or equipment from one meeting room to another.
- XXXII. Rulings of the city fire marshal as to room capacity, aisle space, etc. will be observed.
- XXXIII. Smoking in the Library is not permitted. The use of alcoholic beverages and the unlawful use of drugs are not permitted in the Library or on Library property.
- XXXIV. Groups wishing to serve light refreshments defined as finger foods and beverages may do so in the Community Rooms of the Santa Clara, Hurricane, and Washington Libraries, and in Community Room A at the St. George Library.
- XXXV. Refreshments shall not be taken from the meeting rooms served in other areas of the premises of the library. The following guidelines and fees apply:
- XXXVI. The applicant for the meeting room shall pay for any damage to library property, including upholstery and carpet cleaning.
- a. A non-refundable fee of \$10 must be paid before each meeting at which refreshments are to be served. This fee covers use of Library supplies and equipment to clean the area after the meeting, and staff time to verify that the area has been appropriately cleaned.
 - b. A refundable deposit of \$50 must be left with the Library staff before each meeting at which refreshments will be served. The deposit will be refunded if the meeting room and furnishings are left in a clean, orderly manner, and utensils and dishes are removed immediately after the meeting ends. Groups which intend to serve refreshments at a series of regularly scheduled meetings may leave a single deposit in the form of a personal check (not cash) with the Library, which will be refunded at the end of the series of meetings provided the above conditions are met.
 - c. Beverages which contain dye or food coloring are not permitted in carpeted meeting rooms and areas. The following products are specifically not permitted: Kool Aid and other similar powdered products, fruit juice, cranberry juice, and tomato juice. The Library staff is authorized to prohibit the serving of any other drinks which pose similar risks to the carpet but which are not listed here. It is recommended that applicants with any questions regarding the beverages they plan to serve discuss the matter with the Library staff in advance.

Study Rooms

- XXXVII. The Library provides small study rooms, the use of which is not governed by the policy. These rooms normally include a table and accommodate between four and fourteen individuals. The Library views study rooms as extensions of the general seating areas for the patrons. Moreover, the seating is enclosed in order to provide a higher degree of quiet for the users or to remove a group engaged in extensive conversation from the general seating area. Rules for use of small study rooms vary between branches due to different locations of the rooms and different demands placed on rooms, including if and how they can be reserved and any time limits on their use. The branch procedures for these rooms will be completed in consultation with the Library Director.
- XXXVIII. On occasion, a group wishing to use a study room cannot do so as none are available. On such occasions, the Library may permit the group to use either a Community Room or Conference Room provided that 1) such use does not interfere with a previously scheduled use of a meeting room, and 2) it is clear that the space is being used in lieu of the availability of a regular study room and is not being used for a purpose which would generally require submission of an application for meeting room use. The Library will require that one participant in the group sign a form accepting responsibility for the condition of the room given that meeting rooms cannot be monitored for security by staff members.

Adopted by the Washington County Library Board September 30, 2008
Revised and Approved by the Washington County Library Board July 28, 2009
Revised and Approved by the Washington County Library Board December 13, 2011